

A SPARTAN FATHER

—Harold Stuart Eyre.

Lord Iverdale's little speech was an admirable example of after dinner oratory—light of touch, felicitous in phrase, but, in the opinion of some of his guests, a trifle long. A venerator of the past, his lordship clung to the methods of a more deliberate generation. Sandford irreverently remarked to the girl at his side, "a ripping old chap—but a post-chaise in an age of motor cars."

As the host resumed his seat amid polite applause, and a general movement relaxed, the butler approached with an announcement for his master's private ear.

"I beg your lordship's pardon," he said in a discreetly low voice, "but there's a burglar in the house."

"A burglar! Confound his impudence! Where is he?"

"We don't exactly know, your lordship. One of the maids, hearing a noise in the library, looked in and saw a man at the safe. She went to call one of the footmen, and when they got back the man had disappeared. He couldn't get out of the window, so he must have slipped up your private staircase to the floor above. If your lordship will allow me I'll put Jarvis in my place here and take charge of the search."

"Very good, Haskins. Go by all means. Wait a moment—here is the key to my desk. Take the revolver you will find in the right hand top drawer; you may need it. As soon as I can get away without alarming the ladies I'll join you."

His clean-shaven countenance as impassive as ever, the butler left the room with his customary deliberation of movement. Once outside the door, he went quickly to the library, procured the revolver, and hurried up stairs. At the top of the first flight he found two of the footmen and a groom.

"Can't find 'im nowhere, Mr. 'Askins," said one of the men. "We've hunted in every likely place where 'e could be 'idin, and there ain't a sign of 'im."

"How about the left wing and the servant's quarters?"

The men looked at one another somewhat sheepishly.

"We hardly thought 'e'd be in our part of the house," explained the one who had spoken before; "and 'and as Bill 'ere was just sayin', 'bein' as none of us is armed—"

"You're a lot of cowards!" growled the old man. "Stay here and watch the stairs, and I'll go up myself."

Pistol in hand, the butler went through the new wing and the servants' quarters, room by room, turning on the electric light as he opened each door. As he approached his own room he thought he heard a sound within. Listening for a moment, he was sure of it. Very carefully he turned the knob and entered; so accustomed was his hand to the working of the lock that he was able to do this quite noiselessly.

Near the window at the farther end of the room he saw, dimly outlined in the moonlight, the figure of a man. The intruder was busy with something which apparently involved the ripping of cloth. Haskins softly closed the door behind him and turned on the light.

Dropping the sheet he was tearing, the man stared at the butler with a consternation which turned to quizzical amazement.

"Well, I'm blowed!" he ejaculated. "If it ain't the guv'nor! Who'd 'ave expected to find you 'ere? You gave me a proper start, turnin' on the gim as sudden. Wot are you doin' with that piece of ironmongery in yer 'and?"

"Looking for the thief who was robbing my master's house," was the stern reply. "And it seems I've found him!"

"You certainly 'ave, old Sherlock 'Olmes, thanks to that confounded 'ousemaid downstairs. If she 'adn't been nosin' around I'd 'ave left by the front door like a gentleman. Instead of bein' reduced to the necessity of scloodin' myself 'ere, all in the dark, and makin' a rope out of these bloomin' sheets. But now you've turned up so unexpected, you can save me the trouble. You know the 'ouse, of course, from top to bottom. Ain't there a more dig-

nified way for me to 'ook it than through this window?"

"You needn't look for help from me," returned the old man bitterly. "So this is what you've come to! How long have you been at it?"

"Long enough to be a first class 'and at the game," replied the young man, with a grin. "Wot's worth doin' at all is worth doin' well, is my motto. Why, if you knew my record you'd be proud of me—you couldn't help yourself. I'm no amateur; some of the jobs I've pulled off is the talk of the profession. You remember when the Duchess of Aylesbury lost her diamonds? The work of your 'umble servant. And p'raps you've 'eard of that little affair at Dorchester 'Oouse?"

"You mean on the night of the ball a year ago?"

The other nodded complacently. The butler's jaw dropped.

"There was murder in that!" he exclaimed in a trembling voice. "Do you mean—"

"Self preservation, my dear guv'nor, that's wot it was. You wouldn't 'ave me stand still and be nabbed, would you?"

"Sam," said the old man slowly, "you were wild and good-for-nothing as a boy, and gave Betsy and me trouble enough, God knows; but I never thought you'd come to this—I could never have believed it. After what you've just told me I wish with all my heart you were lying in your coffin! If your mother knew—"

"Drop it!" cried the young man angrily. "None of your preachin'! 'Ere I am waitin' time with you when I ought to be leavin' the 'ouse on the double quick. Are you goin' to 'elp me out of this or not?"

"No, I won't help you. You'd only—"

"Then you're a confounded unnatural father, that's all I've got to say. 'Ere goes for the rope ladder trick!"

Taking the end of the knotted strips of sheet, the young ruffian tied it securely around the leg of the heavy wooden bedstead.

"Wait a minute, Sam," said the old man weakly. "I don't want to be too hard on you. You're young yet, and there's time for you to mend. Give this up, and I'll try to get you a place where you can make an honest living."

"Oh, yes! As pantryman, I s'pose, at three quid a month and all found. Or perhaps as a bloomin' flunky, with my 'air powdered and nice red breeches and silk stockin's! What do you take me for? Why should I do degradin' work like that, after bein' my own master, with no one to say a word to me? All rot! I'm doin' very well, thankee, and I'm in this line for keeps, or till they nab me. And before they do that my little thirty-eight caliber automatic'll 'ave a few remarks to make!"

He buttoned his jacket tightly around him, and with the other end of the improvised rope in his hand, opened the window to its full extent. Throwing one leg over the sill, he turned to wave a mocking farewell. "Ta-ta, guv'nor. Sorry I've got to leave so soon, but you'll 'ear of me again, if you read the papers. Very disoblighin' of you not to let me—"

"Stop!" For a moment the butler wavered, his lips twitching. Now, with a sudden decisive movement he raised the revolver and held it with a steady hand. "I'll give you one more chance," he said solemnly. "Come back and promise to mend your ways, or, so help me God, I'll shoot—and I hope I may kill you!"

"Tain't art bad," commented his son, in derisive appreciation; "not bad at all for an amateur performance. Fact, I've seen it done worse at the Adelphi Theatre. Pity I can't wait for the last act, but dooty calls, so 'ere goes. Good night!"

A shot rang out, and with a groan the young man toppled back into the room.

Outside in the corridor there was the sound of voices and of hurried steps. The door opened and Lord Iverdale came in, followed by some of the servants. The pistol fell to the floor, and the butler turned a white face toward his master.

"Here is the thief, your lordship. He was trying to escape, and I shot him."

Dog Saves Boy From Express Train

South Norwalk, Ct., Feb. 8.—If Carnegie medals went to dogs, Irish, a big St. Bernard, would surely get one.

When little Georgie Plunkett, nicknamed "Buster," was abandoned on a railroad crossing yesterday afternoon, directly in the path of the Pittsfield express Irish grabbed the rope of the sled in his teeth and easily did what was impossible for the strength of the children. He pulled the sled and "Buster" from under the cowcatcher of the engine just in nick of time. The train was stopped, and when the crew ran back they found the big brute affectionately lapping the tears from the lad's face.

EXPERIENCE.

I've shot the chutes and bumped the bumps, And had the measles and the mumps, Experience; And also signed some notes for chumps, Experience. I've hit the pike and looped the loop And had bronchitis and the croup, Experience; And also floundered in the soup, Experience. To friends I've loaned my hard-earned cash, For breakfast I have eaten hash, Experience; I've had the livers, the grip and rash, Experience. In cable cars I've suffered jars, And dodged a million auto-cars, Experience; And through a brick have witnessed stars, Experience. I've had a lot of doppy dreams, Been up against great gold-brick schemes, Experience; I've heard a cracked soprano scream, Experience. I've heard a lot of vaudeville, And smoked cigars that made me ill, Experience; I've written verses—am at it still, Experience.

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Gives Blood to Save Woman

When William J. Sheehan, a North Abington School committeeman and a patient in the Massachusetts General hospital, gave up blood from his own body, he saved the life of a young woman, who is now recovering. The remarkable operation of connecting an artery in his wrist to that of the young woman patient was performed yesterday. Sheehan fainted, and the arteries were cut apart. Sheehan heard the woman needed blood to save her life and volunteered to give his.

A MUCH NEEDED REFORM.

What a mighty reformation we would witness through the land If the masses and the classes could be made to understand That he wins at least one sinner from dishonesty and pelf Who will let alone his neighbor and just practice on himself. —Four-Track News.

THE GOAL THOU SEEKEST.

The moving finger writes, and having writ, Moves on; nor all your piety nor wit Shall lure it back to cancel half a line, Nor all your tears wash out a word of it. —Omar Khayyam.